



San Diego City Attorney **MICHAEL J. AGUIRRE**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 19, 2005

Contact: Maria Velasquez, Communications Director: (619) 235-5725 (pager & voicemail) mvelasquez@saniego.gov

CRIMINAL CHARGES FILED AGAINST SEA BASS POACHERS *Complaint filed by San Diego City Attorney's Office*

San Diego, CA: The Office of the San Diego City Attorney has filed criminal charges against three San Diego men involved in the April 24, 2005, killing of a protected Giant Sea Bass taken from the La Jolla Marine Conservation Area. Omid Adhami, 34 years old, has previously admitted to using a spear gun to kill the protected fish. Nima Hodaji, 26 years old, was diving with Adhami at the time the fish was killed. Navid Adibi, 22 years old, was operating the boat that took the two divers into the Conservation Area.

The Criminal Complaint filed in San Diego Superior Court alleges that all three men assisted in loading the 171 pound protected Giant Sea Bass onto the boat in the Marine Conservation Area off of La Jolla. Two counts of misdemeanor conspiracy have been filed against all three defendants who face up to one year in jail and a \$10,000 fine on each conspiracy charge. According to Deputy City Attorney Kathryn Lange of the City Attorney's Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit, Adhami faces a total four misdemeanor counts (three years in jail and \$22,000 in fines), Hodaji and Adibi each face three misdemeanors counts (two and one-half years in jail and \$21,000 in fines.) Arraignment of the three defendants will take place on June 2, 2005, in Department 1 of the San Diego Superior Court.

Giant Sea Bass are described as docile, curious, and slow moving fish. They are a protected species off of the California Coast. The Giant Sea Bass killed on April 24, 2005, was a reproductive female between 15 and 20 years old. The suspicious activity of the three men was first noticed by the City of San Diego Lifeguards located at the La Jolla Cove. The case is under investigation by the California Department of Fish and Game.

###